



THE VALLEY VIEW

820 Crawford Street
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From the Chief's Desk

I take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Marianne Price, MVP-EO, for her outstanding contributions to the area of equal employment opportunity. Ms. Price has been selected as the Department of the Army's EEO Officer for 2003. She is most deserving due to her dedication, extensive knowledge of EEO and human resources, and commitment to ensuring that all employees and applicants for employment receive equal opportunity in the employment process. The Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) is proud to have Ms. Price serve as EEO Officer in the St. Paul District (MVP). She provides invaluable advice and service to the District, and serves as the regional Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program coordinator for MVD. Ms. Price has developed outstanding activities in the Diversity Appreciation Program; managed the MVP EEO program in such a manner that complaints of discrimination are always at a minimum; coordinated affirmative employment efforts, Special Emphasis Programs, and CO2 in MVP.

Congratulations!

Ms. Judith Gooch

Ms. Gooch has been selected and has accepted the position of "Work Leader" at Dresden Island Lock & Dam. She is the first woman to hold the position of "Work leader" in the Rock Island District.

Annual MVD-Wide EEO/HR/OC Conference 2003



The annual MVD-Wide EEO/HR/OC conference was hosted by MVM-EO in Memphis, 9-12 June. It was a huge success. EEO staff throughout MVD, and the Millington Finance Center attended and presented District and Finance Center updates in EEO and Special Emphasis Program areas. Human Resource and Counsel also participated in the conference. A critical discussion and training on preparing the EEOC 462 Report was presented by Mr. John Sellmansberger, Deputy Chief, USACE-EEO. EEO Offices throughout the Department of the Army have struggled with this massive, time consuming, tedious, numerically challenging report annually. MVD wanted to get a personalized training session and found the conference to be the ideal time. The report is due to USACE 1 October each year. USACE compiles all Division reports and sends them to the Department of the Army for further compilation for EEOC.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Kyles, talked about "Dreams". His talk was so mesmerizing as he described the final hours of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis. He spoke of Dr. King's dream of a nation where we all

will be judged by the content of our character and not by the color of our skin, and impressed on us that we should dream dreams, and work to fulfill those dreams.

Highlights:

- Keynote Speaker, Dr. Samuel Kyles, Civil Rights Activist
- EEOC Updates/Decision presented by Honorable Zia Schostal, EEOC Administrative Judge
- Reasonable Accommodations presented by Mr. Alvin Ellis, MVM Labor Counselor
- The 462 Report conducted by Mr. John Sellmansberger, USACE-EEO
- Stress Management Workshop conducted by Mr. James F. Johnson, Small Planet Works
- Equity Jeopardy hosted by Mr. Jim Pogue, MVM PAO

Do the Right Thing

Every organization exists because of its most valuable resource - PEOPLE. People guide the processes within an organization through management and implementation of the various programs and activities of the organization. People, not the organization, fulfill the organization's mission. There are laws, regulations, and executive orders that dictate how we treat our most valuable resource in all aspects of employment. Programs are established and supported by congressional acts that have as their charge, the implementation of policies and programs to assist employees in achieving their greatest potential through employment opportunities without regard to their race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, physical or mental disability.

Equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs are mandated by Congress as a means of eliminating employment discrimination in the application of Federal personnel practices and policies. Many laws, regulations, and authorities govern the EEO process and the organization of EEO programs and activities. We have not yet reached a point in our society where there exists no need for EEO programs. Acts of discrimination - whether intentional or unintentional - affect various managerial decisions and actions that create an adverse impact on individuals and groups still occur in the Federal system. We continue to see settlement agreements, judgment awards, corrective actions, compensatory awards, and other awards of relief provided in redress for discrimination. EEO programs are critical to assisting organizations achieve a balanced, representative workforce, and assisting to eliminate the vestiges of past wrongs to underrepresented groups. Diversity has been added to the modules in the Army's CO2 program. There is a need for all of us to be more cognizant of the value of diverse people, skills, knowledge, cultures, learning and delivery styles, and regional ideologies that make up our society and our workplace. EEO programs and activities assist organizations in guiding the process of shifting paradigms and inculcating the ideas of inclusiveness and equal treatment for all throughout all parts of the organization. MVD has experienced a decrease in discrimination complaints over the past year. MVD is more aware of and/or exhibit more of an appreciation for differences, how management styles and interpersonal skills impact those we manage and interact with, the importance of good communication skills, the need to communicate, the importance of everyone doing their part in the achievement of organizational goals, objectives and the overall mission. The commanders, managers, and employees are to be commended for their efforts, commitment, and cooperation in assisting MVD in the endeavor to realize its strategic goal of being the "Employer of Choice".



MVD

- ➔ MVD employees have completed POSH and EEO Update training, and CO2 sessions on Alternative Dispute Resolution and Diversity.
- ➔ MVD/MK Special Emphasis Programs:
 - ∴ African American Heritage Month
 - ∴ Hispanic Heritage Month
 - ∴ Asian American Pacific Islander History
 - ∴ Women's History Month
- ➔ Catherine Cummings (MVS -EO), Gwen Taylor (MVK EEO Specialist), and Frankie Whitmore (DFAS EEO Specialist) attended the EEO Officers' Course at DEOMI in May.

MVP

- ➔ St. Paul is conducting CO2 sessions as an ongoing project. Colonel Ball facilitated the first CO2 session, "Hostile Work Environment." Other modules "EEO and MER: What's the Difference"; "Xers and Boomers on the Workplace"; and "Doing the Right Thing" are a part of the ongoing efforts in CO2 at MVP.

MVR

- ➔ In May, Lunch and Learn session on "After Duty Hours Educational Opportunities" was conducted.
- ➔ 11 June and 9 July - Lunch and Learn sessions were conducted on "Networking and Informational Interviewing"; "Writing Success Statements for Your Federal Career Development"; "RESUMIX"; and "OF 612 and KSAs".

MVS

- ➔ Created and EEO Resource Center (videos, children's books, and various books that cover all the SEP areas)
- ➔ Women's History Sunshine Sack Program (\$2000 worth of supplies raised/received over 65 sacks)

- ➔ Guest Speaker from local Domestic Violence Shelter
- ➔ Initiated contact with Harris-Stowe College (HBCU) and attended a Career Fair
- ➔ Park Ranger Andrew Jackson awarded EEO Community Service Award; Paula Bell, IM Specialist, awarded FEB Disability Award for St. Louis area
- ➔ Outstanding displays and educational information provided to the employees for each SEP month
- ➔ May - Asian Pacific American Month activities focused on similarities and differences in China and Japan; displays of the two countries; books, videos, and other items from each country; and videos of and a PowerPoint presentation on each country.
- ➔ POSH is over 50% complete.

MVM

- ➔ Special Emphasis Programs:
 - ∴ Hispanic Employment Program
 - Heritage Observance, Dr. Jose A. Valazquez, Executive Director, Latino Memphis
 - Accomplishments:
 - Bilingual edition of MVM website
 - Recruiting efforts, Fiesta Latino Memphis 2003
 - ∴ Black Employment Program
 - MLK Celebration, the Rev. Dr. Billy Kyles, Civil Rights advocate
 - Heritage Observance, A.C. Wharton, Mayor Shelby Co., TN
 - Accomplishments:
 - Marine license certification program
 - East High School, Memphis, Adopt-A-School
 - ∴ Federal Women's Program
 - Heritage Observance, Dr. Shirley Raines, President, University of Memphis
 - Accomplishments:
 - Memory Tree memorial service
 - Winter 2002 project solicited extra leave and

cash contributions for stricken colleague

- ➔ 15 - 16 April - 32 employees completed EEO Orientation Training provided by DEOMI
- ➔ 404 managers and employees received certificates for having completed EEO and POSH training
- ➔ MVM hosted the annual MVD-wide EEO/HR/OC conference in June.
- ➔ EEO and POSH training will be provided to the revetment and crewmen on the vessels during Ship-Up.
- ➔ MVM CO2 sessions on "Cultural Diversity and Communication" began in June 03

MVK

- ➔ AEP and Complaints Training, Washington, D.C.
- ➔ Blacks in Government Regional Conference, Orlando, FL
- ➔ 1 May - Asian Pacific Americans Lunch and Learn session on the Japan American Society of Mississippi
- ➔ 14 May - Asian Pacific Americans Heritage Program
- ➔ 28 May - Asian Pacific American Lunch and Learn session

MVN

- ➔ Providing POSH via the Intranet
- ➔ Employed 2 students in the Workforce Recruitment Program for Colleges with Disabilities (WRP)
- ➔ Won the Federal Executive Board's (FEB) 2003 Equal Employment Opportunity Agency Award
- ➔ Provided the following activities in CO2
 - ∴ Black History Month Video
 - ∴ Conflict Resolution
 - ∴ Bad Apples (How to Deal with Difficult Attitudes)
 - ∴ When the Going Gets Tough (Dealing with Stress & Change)
 - ∴ Emotional Intelligence
- ➔ AEP and Complaints training
- ➔ Throughout April, "Bad Apples: Dealing with difficult attitudes" was conducted.
- ➔ In May, "The Blame Game: Teaching the importance of personal and organizational responsibility" and "When the

Going Gets Tough: A guide to seeing the practical applications of a sense of humor" was conducted.



Ms. Susan Hampton received the EEO Woman of the Year Award for 2003, for her outstanding contributions to MVD and the community. She works with many community projects in the social and civic areas to foster sound relationships between the community and the Corps of Engineers in the Mississippi Valley.



Mr. Charles Barton, Chief Real Estate Division, MVD, was awarded the MVD EEO Award for 2003. He has exemplified the kind and quality of dedication and leadership that is desirable in today's learning and business-like environment. He took the initiative to respond to the needs of the organization to better interface with both internal and external customers and stakeholders by facilitating numerous sessions on Consideration of Others (CO2).

Mr. Barton planned his enormous workload schedule with the flexibility that allowed him to schedule eight sessions on Communications and Team Building. He succeeded in capturing the entire MVD Headquarters as an audience through small group sessions. He worked with the Equal Employment Opportunity Office to ensure modules were consistent with the goal of CO2 and that the sessions met the objectives of the CO2 lesson plans.

CO2 is a mandatory program sanctioned by the Commanding Chief,

USACE. It is periodically monitored to ensure employees throughout the Corps are aware of the commitment to building relationships based on dignity and respect for every employee, customer, and stakeholder, internal and external to the Corps. Mr. Barton led the effort to ensure full participation of all MVD employees in CO2 sessions during FY02 from July through September. He has demonstrated MVD's commitment to build effective, enduring, and respectful relationships.



Mr. Logue, recipient of the 2001 MVD EEO award, retired 28 Jul 03.

Mr. Logue worked diligently to improve the equal opportunity climate throughout MVD. He has been the Wage Grade Training Champion for MVD and was devoted to ensuring that employees in the wage grade system receive equal opportunity in training, advancement and career achievement. He led the initiatives in resolving EEO issues on the Motor Vessel Mississippi.

Aside from being a strong supporter of equal opportunity in his own job area, Mr. Logue was very outspoken regarding the civil rights of all individuals within and outside MVD. He offered his assistance to EEO whenever there was a need. He made himself available for meetings/discussions whenever there was an EEO issue in his work unit and he spent whatever time necessary to ensure that the issues were being addressed and not ignored or given mere cursory attention.

During Quality Assurance visits and Command Inspection trips to the districts, Mr. Logue always provided ample time to meet with employees on the vessels that are in the vicinity. He never failed to include EEO in his visits to various field sites and provided update reports on activity in the field that related to EEO initiatives.

DA INTERNS

- **Ms. Gladys Lee.** When Gladys Lee began her internship at the Vicksburg District, she had limited experience in the EEO field. Her experience was based entirely on expertise acquired in the military with EO. In the past two years Gladys has attended many classes which enabled her to understand and perform the work required in an EEO office. She believes that it takes more than knowing the mechanics of the EEO process to mature into the kind of professional that she aspires to become, and is, therefore, gratefully for the opportunity and experience.

Gladys feels obligated to the Department of the Army for several years. She plans to stay in the EEO field for a number of years but wants to experience other governmental agencies' operations in EEO before leaving the workforce.

Gladys wishes to take this opportunity to thank all of the EEO professionals that have mentored her through this internship. She learned EEO policy and procedures from Ms. Bargains and how to implement policy from Mr. Oliver. This experience has broadened her knowledge and provided her with the needed foundation to manage an EEO office.

- **Ms. Laverne Burks.** Ms. Laverne Burks was assigned to ERDC as a DA intern and came to MVD on a developmental assignment. She has this to say about her experiences with MVD-EO.

"When I became a DA Intern EEO Specialist, I had to decide how the two years of my internship would be.

Although I had a Master Training Plan, I wanted an opportunity to learn the Division roles and responsibilities in complaint management. Ann Bargains, MVD Chief, EEO afforded me this opportunity. Under her tutelage, I learned two valuable lessons, (1) spend energy on solutions, and (2) take personal responsibility for fixing things.

Ms. Bargains never hesitated to share her wealth of knowledge and expertise. One day, she and I would review and I would digest the entire EEO process and why Mediation (ADR) is valuable to the agency. Another day, we would discuss the

importance of a working relationship between EEO, HR, OC and the Union. Some days, Ms. Bargains would afford me opportunities to write after action reviews (AAR's).

When I left MVD on 24 January 2003, I had six months left on the training program. I was better prepared to make a culture shift. I was ready to pursue a culture of total quality and personal accountability."

Laverne has completed her internship and is assigned to the Louisville District as an EEO Specialist.

Did you know?



The EEO 462 Report is a report generated by each district, division, and headquarters to the Department of the Army on an annual basis. This report provides information on the numbers of: informal and formal complaints in each unit of USACE that was left over from the previous reporting year, new informal and formal complaints in the current reporting year, collateral-duty counselors, trained counselors, specialists, settlements, closures, remands, and withdrawals. It also reports on the number of complainant utilizing alternative dispute resolution, and the amount of money paid in settlements, and attorneys' fees. It is a very in-depth report that the Army provides to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to assist in program and process development and management. In real terms, it is an agency's and a department's report card.

The Affirmative Employment Program (AEP) is a vital part of EEO and supports the need for affirmative employment action in the Federal sector. The purposes of the AEP are to (1) achieve representative diversity in the workforce; and (2) correct imbalances in the impact of employment-related selections (for training, awards, promotions, etc). Affirmative employment action is necessary when the percentage of a protected group in a particular occupation in the workforce is significantly less than that group's representation in that occupation in the relevant applicant pool, according to a statistical analysis. It is also necessary when selections of a protected group are significantly below the expected level, according to a statistical analysis. In guidelines issued by the Department of the

Army in March 1988, policy requires that: (a) The Department of the Army will take affirmative action to overcome the effects of past and present discriminatory practices, policies, or other barriers to equal employment opportunity. These affirmative actions are to be designed to work toward achievement of a work force, at all grade levels and occupational categories, that are representative of the appropriate civilian labor force; (b) Practices that have an adverse effect on individuals or groups of individuals because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap should be eliminated. This does not preclude development of policies or procedures that take into account lawful consideration of these factors in order to overcome the effects of past discrimination or adverse treatment (AR 690-12, Chapter 2).

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is an effective means of resolving employment disputes that allows the disputing parties the opportunity to reach a win-win resolution to the issue(s) in dispute. **Mediation** is the USACE preferred ADR method. Participation in ADR is voluntary for the aggrieved party, and the agency is encouraged to participate. Mediation opens the door for the disputing parties to work together to resolve the issue(s) in dispute, thus facilitating a climate of cooperation, open communication, building trust, and improved work relations. It is a process that involves having a neutral third party assist the disputing parties to reach a voluntary, negotiated resolution of a charge of discrimination. The major advantages of mediation include: an efficient process that saves time and money; a fair process with a neutral third party who has no interest in the outcome; a confidential process where any and all notes taken during the session are completely destroyed; settlement agreements obtained in mediation do not constitute an admission by the employer of any violation of EEOC enforceable laws; and it avoids lengthy and unnecessary litigation.

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